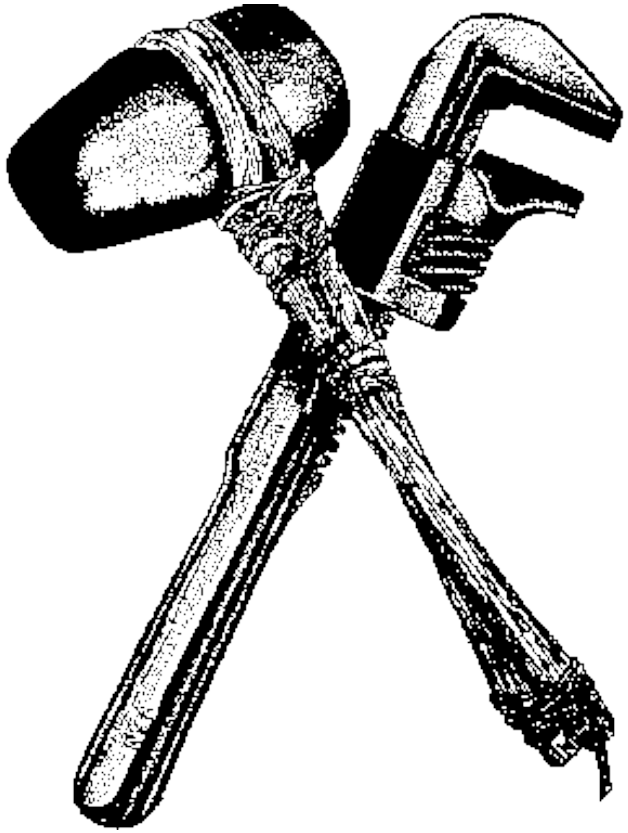

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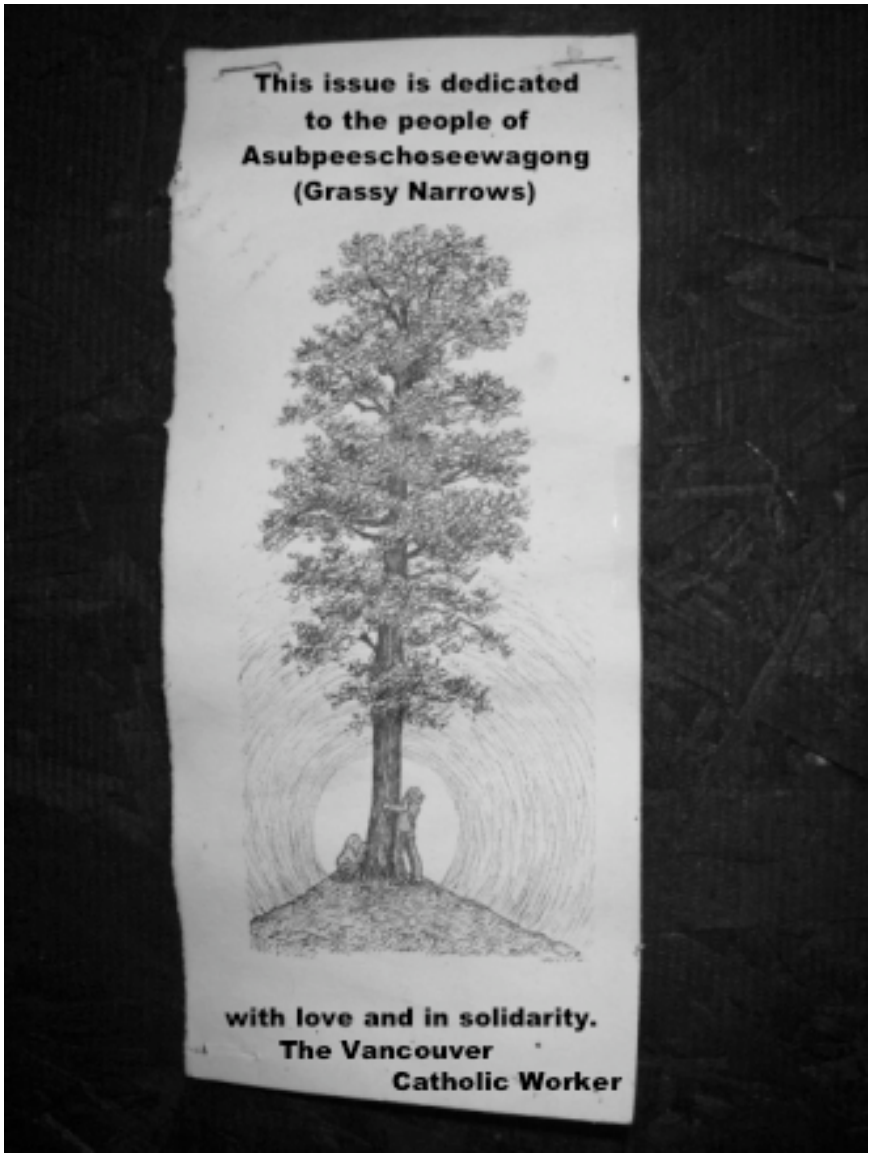

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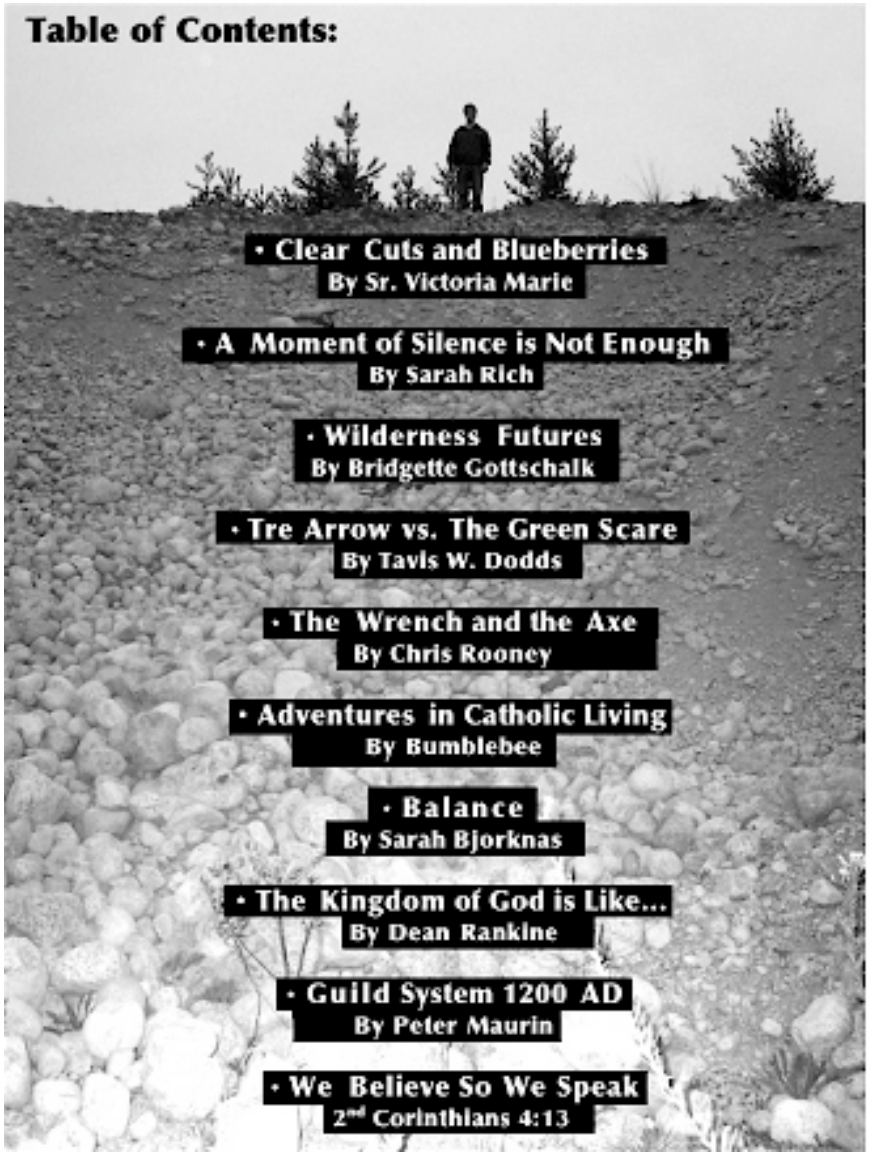

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Useful links and Resources:

-Catholic Worker Websites:

www.catholicworker.com
www.catholicworker.org
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-Radical/Progressive Christianity

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-Anti-War

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www.plowsharesactions.org
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-Activism

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www.iww.org
www.deathpenalty.org
www.freegan.info
www.justicia4migrantworkers.org
www.noiivan.blogspot.com
www.streamsofjustice.org
www.thekingcenter.com
www.witnesstorture.org

-Other Good Websites:

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www.muzzlewatch.org
www.southcentralfarmers.com
www.commongroundrelief.org
www.teachingforpeace,org
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Clear-Cuts and Blueberries

Victoria Marie

In August 2007 Chris Rooney and Sr. Victoria Marie of the Van CW were part of a CPT delegation to North Western Ontario many of the images in this issue were taken by out fellow delegates. CR

Saint Francis of Assisi saw the beauty and interconnectedness of all things, which inspired him to write the Canticle of Brother Sun. Bonaventure writes that God is visible in his footprints, that is, in creation. Plants, animals, earth, air, wind, fire, people, all bear the imprint of the Creator. Many of us have become so far removed from the natural wonder of our world that we ignore the sacred connection of creatures—creation, to their Creator.

During the delegation's visit to the Asubpeeschoseewagong (Grassy Narrows) First Nation, we had the opportunity to see, experience and learn from people who remember and live in away that respects the sacredness of life. We saw how a natural forest is a diverse, interdependent ecosystem. We learned how the forest supports both plant and animal species that also support human life.

We also saw clear-cuts and their results. In speaking of what is happening at Whiskey Jack Forest of Grassy Narrows, Brian Tuesday, says that the people "are forced to disconnect from the very life that sustains them. The trees, the animals, the plants that they coexist with and had a living relationship with are being destroyed." The areas that have been clear-cut have been replaced with a mono-culture of genetically engineered trees.

In a short one hour drive we passed several of these tree farms. The clear-cuts destroyed the habitat of several species of animals, birds and plants and in turn the loss of food, medicines and other resources that sustain three of the community's families.

Yet there is hope. Normally, areas that have been clear-cut are chemically treated so that no other types of tree or vegetation can grow there besides grass, ensuring that the selected type of tree has no competition for soil nutrients. Pressure from Grassy Narrows and the four year Blockade contributed to the cessation of aerial spraying in the area thus enabling some local vegetation to re-establish itself.

There are signs of life returning. In one of these areas blueberries abound. The team was invited to pick blueberries by one of our hosts from Grassy Narrows. One of the team, Pat McSherry, remarked on how surreal it was to see the contrast between the clearcut and the thriving blueberries.

As suggested above, one can glimpse the image of God through the footprints of the Divine One in creation. Not only humans but all of creation bears the divine imprint of the Creator. Further, each microbe and being of creation is unique. Each deserves reverence and respect because of its singular manifestation of the Divine spark—of God. Wanton destruction of creation for greed without regard for its inherent sacredness is a form of sacrilege.

My experience of Grassy Narrows has prompted me to reflect on what happens if the clear-cutting does not stop and the life of the Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation is drained away. It is not enough for me to point the finger at others. I have to contemplate on how the Gospel is calling me respond to the challenging question posed by Brian Tuesday, "What have we done to see that justice prevails?" @

A Moment of Silence Is Not Enough

Sara Rich

Monday 20 March 2006

On March 18th Sara Rich, mother of an AWOL US soldier, gave this address at an anti-war rally in Eugene, Oregon.

Hello - I came to you in September praying for peace as I was bound by the fear of my daughter's impending redeployment to Iraq.

WHO SAYS LIGHTNING DOESN'T STRIKE TWICE? We got the date for her redeployment 9 months before her entitled 18 months decompression time. Her commanding officer forced her to sign a waiver of her rights to decompression time between deployments and gave her a date 11 months after she returned from Iraq the first time. Then, a few weeks later, she got her readiness papers - that 6 months after she hopefully returned from Iraq the second time, she was scheduled to go over for yet another year. Making it three deployments to Iraq in less than four years.

All of our hearts were heavy. Three days before her actual redeployment, she was packed and ready to go, she had her car keys in her hand, and she turned to me and said, "I don't think I can do this." I was shocked but knew any type of coercion on my part would not help, so I said, "Are you serious?" She replied, "I just can't do it, Mom." She could not go back there to the misery. She told me that being separated from her family and living and breathing Army for a year at a time in a war zone was a constant source of distress for her. Where nobody cares whether you live or die as long as you do what you are told and they look good afterwards. Nor could she handle another deployment, dealing with the daily hour-to-hour sexual harassment that she endured from 99% of her male officers and fellow soldiers. The isolation and fear of being attacked, harassed, molested and raped was a huge part of her life in Iraq. She was always full of anxiety and stress just keeping herself safe when her commanding officers would show up banging on her door in the middle of the night, intoxicated and wanting to have sex with her. The intimidation and sexual harassment that our female soldiers are enduring is leading to massive stress and in some cases even death for our military women in Iraq. They are not supported but shamed when they bring these to the attention of their superiors.

I took a deep breath and I told her either way she is my hero and I will support her decision. She decided that she was going to go AWOL and to leave the Army.

That the US is in Iraq for something that is pointless was a common feeling for many of the soldiers she was stationed with. (Here's were she went off.) The US is not the world police. Why can't we focus on the multiple crises we have in our own country? The hurricanes that took thousands of lives. Or why not go to Afghanistan, where there are actually terrorists? It is abominable that we are sending our troops over there and paying them a pittance - the average soldier that is married and has a family to support gets about $2,000 a month, and at the same time we are sending contractors from Blackwater over to do the same security jobs and paying them $15,000 a month to be there and risk their lives. This makes no sense, especially to our soldiers.

She kept asking, and now I'm asking you, What is the purpose? This is an outrage and is just adding to the growing evidence that we are losing thousands of lives and causing permanent injuries to our soldiers, for what? Oil? Money? Why are we not trying to educate the Iraqis, if liberating them is so important.

My daughter tells me, "Mom, while I was in Iraq, the children were never in school, they were out in the street begging for candy. They were never being watched or supervised, just allowed to run wild. I was never sure what we were or still are trying to accomplish in Iraq. I never saw the US do anything to make things better while I was there. My unit would go out on useless missions and end up being shot at in the dark by our supposed allies because communication between the US and our allies was so poor. We need to get the hell out of Iraq

and let them solve their own problems. Most Iraqis don't want us there anyway. We should have done this years ago, but I guess our government saw it as making us money in some weird way. I think the reason that post traumatic stress syndrome is so huge is because this was an invasion/war without a purpose. no one benefited from us being there. Except that Saddam Hussein got a free ticket out of Iraq.... Why do we think we should be liberating all these countries when we can't even feed or house our own children in the United States? How about working on oppression and racism here in the US? Maybe we need someone to come liberate us!!" I could tell that my daughter felt liberated herself and finally touched on some of her anger for the Army as she went on. Here are some more thoughts for us here today.

Listen closely to me now.... We Need to Bring Our Soldiers Home NOW and Take Care of Them When They Get Here. The most controversial part of this, for many people, is the "Now." We are moving into the fourth year of a war that should never have happened. The largest air assault since the invasion of Iraq three years ago has just been launched by the US.

The problem remains: This war was wrong from the beginning and continuing it will not make it right. A continuation - and now escalation - of the war in Iraq will only lead to more deaths among US troops and Iraqi children, women and men. It will make us less safe in the world. It will mean more troops suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). We also need to take care of the troops when they get home, giving them the support - medical, psychological and economic - that they need. The administration has failed at this as well.

Some say a phased withdrawal is not a good strategy. Partial withdrawal of the troops will only leave those who remain in Iraq at greater risk. Phased withdrawal was attempted in the Vietnam War, resulting in an increased death rate for troops who remained in Vietnam as others were "phased out." The safest thing for our troops, the best thing for our nation, and the best thing for the people of Iraq is to get the troops home now. Military people with whom we have spoken say that all troops could be pulled back into Kuwait in a matter of a month or so; and from there, planes and boats could bring them on home.

I would tell you that... Congress is responsible for allowing the president to take the nation to war; Congress continues to fund the war, which allows it to continue; and Congress has failed to show leadership and take action to bring the war to an end. We are calling on Congress to show some leadership, take a stand and bring our troops home now. Although it is true that the president ordered the troops into Iraq, and the president used and continues to use fear of terrorism and of Al Qaeda to try to justify his policies and to keep the American people from asking the questions that need to be asked, Congress has been complicit with the president's plan. They have gone along with George Bush's war plan and have consistently failed to challenge and question his actions. It is past time for both Republicans and Democrats in Congress to show some courage, speak out and bring our troops home now.

Leaving Iraq now is the best way to honor those who have already sacrificed in this war. The President would like us to think that leaving now would be dishonoring those who have already died, those who have already been wounded, those who have sacrificed so much. But more deaths, more wounded, more troops suffering from PTSD, more families suffering both here and in Iraq will not honor the sacrifices that have been made.

Yet there are those who would ask for a moment of silence. Tell that to the grieving mother, the young wife, the orphaned child of the 2,314 dead soldiers this war has caused. They will listen to that silence FOREVER. A "moment of silence" isn't enough! Many politicians want to offer a moment of silence at times like this, "to honor the sacrifice of our service men and women." A "moment of silence" is not what is needed from our political leaders, who are allowing the violence in Iraq to escalate with the recently launched large-scale US air assault. Politicians who want to honor the fallen and support our troops need to show some leadership and speak out to bring our troops home NOW!

You here today are part of a massive groundswell of opposition. My family is asking you to reach out to friends who have not yet taken action, and encourage them to get involved now. Actions that can be taken: War tax resistance, counter military recruitment work, letters to newspapers, supporting peace candidates and delegations, bringing Iraqi women speakers here, full page newspaper ads, speaking out in their own circles and showing that dissent is patriotic. And as we spiritually pray for peace, let's start demanding peace from our nation's leaders. Demand an end to the killing and the violence. We have over 16,000 injured soldiers who are receiving sub-standard care. Now is not the time for passivity. Now is the time to write the letters, make some noise.... Do not be complacent anymore. Do something every day to demand peace and the safe return of everyone of our soldiers NOW! @

Three ways that you can help The Christian Radical:

- Link to, or visit our blog **www.thechristianradical.blogspot.com** that's where the new online versions get posted each month and it's where you can read news and opinion pieces that don't get published in the zine itself.

- Show your support by writing an article or sending us some original photography or artwork. The deadline is always the 21st of the month; send your work along with a *very* short bio (40 words or less) to **the.christian.radical.zine@gmail.com**

- Help us print this thing! We're tired of groups who seem more interested in cash money than grass roots participation, that's why we're ad free and don't ask for money. This zine is paid for by the people who print it wherever it's found. If you would like to help with printing it write to the address above and ask us, we'll happily add you to our list of printers.

If you *really* want to give some money to someone please send your cash to the Vancouver Catholic Worker or a Catholic Worker community in your area. For a list of Catholic Worker communities world wide visit **www.catholicworker.org** or send your money to:

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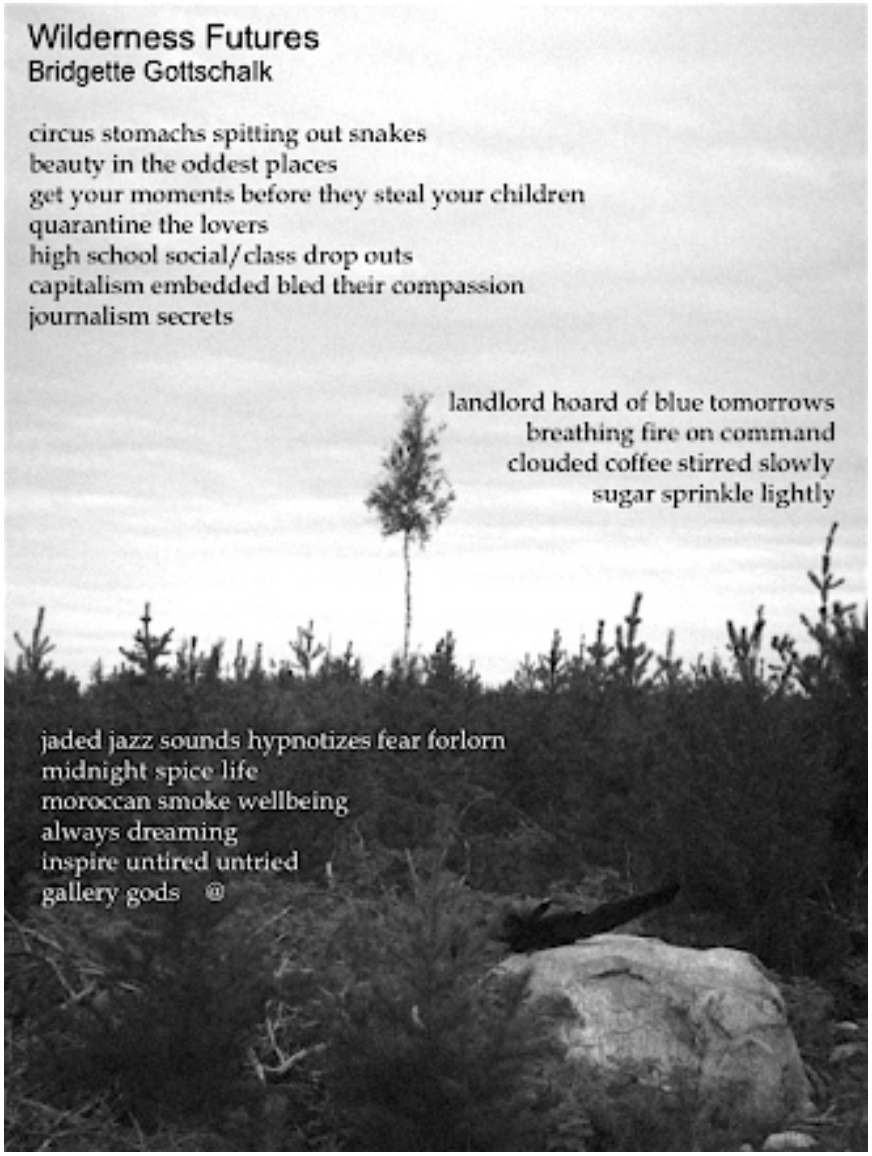
Vancouver BC Canada V6A 1W6

Thanks for reading and thanks for all of your continued support.

Chris Rooney
Karl Germyn
Editors, The Christian Radical.



Tre Arrow vs. The Green Scare

Tavis W. Dodds

My first impression of Tre Arrow is that prison is harder on some people than others; his fingernails have hardly grown back after having fasted for nearly two months, his frame seems whittled away from how he looks in the video footage of him on the tiny ledge of a building he scaled and occupied for several days. His eyes are slightly bloodshot and more protruded than I'd seen in photographs, but even on this first impression I can tell immediately from his eyes that they have not yet broken his spirit, his defiance against injustice and oppression, even here in Victoria BC's Wilkonson Road Penitentiary. That Tre should starve nearly three years in a Canadian prison while fighting extradition to the US is due, in part, to his dedication to a whole-foods diet in which no food is eaten when any plant or animal was harmed in the production of the food, which leaves only fruits and some vegetables like leafy greens gathered from the outside of the plant. At one point in which Tre's diet threatened to kill him, doctors made the unprecedented demand that Corrections Canada allow Tre to have the food that he needs. Since that point Tre's supporters have been allowed to bring food in to the prison. Tre leans over into the plexi-glass that separates us in our little visiting cage and says into his phone "If you do one thing for my campaign and one thing only, pick figs." And so I find myself picking figs and plums from trees in Goldstream Park, musing about the bizarre injustices in the case of Tre Arrow versus imperialist anti-terrorism.

Once described by Rolling Stone Magazine as "the rock star of environmental activism", Tre spent several weeks at the top of the FBI's most wanted due to accusations that he was involved in blowing up two logging trucks, a charge he denies but for which he is facing a life sentence if US district attorneys have their way. The only evidence against Tre is the testimony of two others charged with the damage to the trucks. The three accused were subjected to 24 hour FBI interrogations and the other two accused had their sentences reduced by over 80 percent after the testimonies were made against Tre. While I was waiting to get into the prison I asked to speak to the prison chaplain who told me that there was no way that he could imagine that Tre could be guilty of the crimes he's accused of. "His supporters," he told me, "consider him a political prisoner."

Few are aware that the when the US enacted its Patriot Act it was used first against US citizens, so-called “domestic terrorists” or “Eco-terrorists”, namely those protesting against logging of old growth trees in Oregon’s rain forests. It is a piece of US history that has come to be referred to as The Green Scare. Many of those accused with terrorism fled from authorities and have been turning up all over the continent ever since.

Tre fled to Canada. He spent time on Prince Edward Island and saw more of Canada than many Canadians ever do, finally he settled in BC. After evading the FBI for years, Tre was apprehended by a Canadian Tire security guard after he tried to steal bolt cutters to get food out of a locked dumpster. The security guard collected a $40 000 US reward from the FBI.

Picking fruit may seem to be a feeble action against the single minded behemoth of today’s US military industrial complex. Every soldier fleeing US imperialism has so far been refused sanctuary in Canada, a move that ignores our heritage of having welcomed draft dodgers during the Vietnam war. When Mark Emery was arrested for selling mail order seeds to Americans US agents arrested him in Canada. All these political prisoners must fight legal battles in a biased court system and Canadians are left with a nagging question: just how much of Canadian sovereignty is a myth?

When I return home with my boxes of figs and plums I call the number of the Tre Arrow defense team and they tell me to leave the fruit outside my house the next morning. A hippie-looking guy on a bicycle with a trailer comes by and loads the fruit onto his heaping stack of fruit on its way to jail. It’s almost as if those trees are reaching through the bars, the roots slowly growing through the walls, slow cracks in the foundation of oppression. @

The Wrench and The Axe

Chris Rooney

I’m struggling to come up with something to write for this months issue. Normally this isn’t a problem for me but this month I have to pull something out of my chest that is there but also very difficult to dislodge. I’ve been trying to put what I experienced in Kenora and at Grassy Narrows into a broader context, I’ve been trying to put the substance of these experiences into my own words, and it’s daunting.

Before I can go any further I have to tell you what little I can about where and what I’m writing about. In 2002, after decades of mistreatment, buck passing and racist policies the Anishnaabe at Grassy Narrows set up a roadblock to prevent the further destruction of their traditional lands by logging companies and by the Province of Ontario. Christian Peacemaker Teams was invited at that time to act as international observers so that their presence would reduce the risk of police violence against the protestors. After a couple of years the blockade began enforcing itself and the First Nations community suggested that CPT shift it’s presence to the nearby town of Kenora Ontario where the mostly white community is extremely racist towards the Anishnaabe and where the local indigenous peoples feel most regularly threatened.

Sr. Vikki, her friend Pat McSherry and I were all members of the most recent CPT delegation to that area, we camped at the blockade, attended a Pow-Wow, visited a clear-cut which had destroyed three families trap lines and taken out an area larger than New York’s Central Park. We heard about how a local paper mill had slowly dumped fifty tonnes on mercury in the waters around the reserve causing an inter-generational epidemic of mercury poisoning that now affects 80% of the aboriginal people on the English River system, we heard how the over fishing by tourists in Lake of the Woods was being unfairly attributed to the Anishnaabe. We also learned a great deal about the deception known as Treaty 3, a treaty between the First Nations in that area and the Federal government of Canada. I had the opportunity to read excerpts of the Government document called Treaty 3 and the Pay Pom agreement--the oral version of the treaty signed by the Anishnaabe and other surrounding Nations.
On our way into Kenora from Winnipeg our eyes were assaulted by piles of logs waiting to be processed and sold by these same companies who act with relative

impunity and a free pass from the Province of Ontario, which doesn't recognise or honour either version of the treaty.

I could go on but I'd like to focus on my experience of the pow-wow and the hospitality shown to us by the Grassy Narrows community.

I had never been on a reserve before. The Canadian government has been really good at placing them out of the way. Even those which are close to urban areas like the one near the town called Tsawwassen in BC is so hard to find you'd have to either know where it is or end up there by accident. I'm not certain how many people my age have ever deliberately gone to a reserve either for a celebration like the Pow-Wow or as a guest of a family or the community.

My own experience before going to Grassy Narrows had not prepared me for what I encountered there. On the one hand the place looked like it was falling apart, it was the opposite of the sorts of rural communities that many of us newcomers might go to for a vacation, yet this unparalleled natural beauty surrounded it.

The Pow-Wow also was something so totally foreign to anything I had ever been a part of. In the centre of the circular grounds was a shelter made out of branches and logs which was thatched over with birch bows still green and alive. Under this shelter were several large drums, and groups of singers would take turns beating out a steady rhythm and singing traditional songs. Everyone would dance around the shelter clockwise, many men and women and children wearing stunning regalia and doing ancient dances. At the dinner hour Grassy Narrows would prepare a feast and everyone was invited to eat for free, I want to stress this, the only things that cost money were the things that were for sale, the pow-wow and the dinners were free for everyone, and everyone had enough. Also there were contests of all sorts and you could win money. As the crowd sat down to eat there were bawdy jokes and stories and once the grounds were cleaned up the dancing would resume and would go on well into the night.

I can recall looking over the shelter at the sun setting on the lake and at that moment it all sort of clicked for me and I felt very much that this place, these people, their hospitality and their generosity, the music, indeed even the earth and the lands around us were not "Canada" in the way that I was taught to think of this land. This place was something much older and so very much more in step with how this land was meant to get along with things.

I'm not talking here about the reserve, the reserve system is a racist ghetttoisation of the people who belong to this land, it's a way for our foreign government to keep people in social and economic straightjackets while we steal their lands and use them for our own ends. What I was watching as the people danced onto the grounds during the grand entry was something different, something better.

The Anarchist philosopher Hakim Bey has written about something he calls the "Temporary Autonomous Zone" a place or moment where hierarchy and authorities are suspended, places which--for however long they exist--open up the world to something human, something egalitarian and free. I think of it as being like a revolutionary moment, a time where people take back the joy of living, when people reclaim their traditions and share them with each other; where one person can look at another as a brother or sister and where barriers like skin colour or class no longer matter and are revealed as having only ever mattered in our heads.

I thought about all of these things as I watched the procession and all of the other dances and games, and I thought about my own culture: it's a culture of death where we're told we have to kill the Indian to save the man, it's a culture where wilderness is nothing but an untapped resource waiting to be exploited, it's a culture of chauvinism and capitalism, it's the culture which gave birth to the notions of "Race" "Class" and "Nation" the three most malignant and fraudulent concepts ever forced upon humanity. I lament that my culture is responsible for the reserve system which gave birth to Aparthide, I lament that my people have slaughtered the people who belong to this land and then claimed the land as our own, I lament that one decade after the white colonists moved to this continent 90% of it's inhabitants were killed by our diseases. I lament for smallpox blankets, Duck Lake, Wounded Knee, residential schooling, the on-going incarceration of Leonard Peltier and others, and I mourn for our planet

because it's this culture I'm part of which is doing everything it can to destroy all life on earth.

As I grieve I think also of the hope I saw in the community at Grassy Narrows. I reflect on the traditions and life ways of these people, and the many other First Nations of this land. As I think about this I also hope that for our sakes we as newcomers and the generations after us could begin to repair the centuries of damage and ignorance and neglect we have inflicted on our brothers and sisters. I pray that one day people all over the former colonies might begin this process by returning what ever land we individually and corporately possess. I pray that we could meet one another in places like that pow-wow and find peaceful and life giving ways to extend those Temporary Autonomous Zones so that in time they render useless demarcations like borders and barriers and where horizontalism trumps hierarchy.

The North American empire is not long for this world, anything built on so many bones and cemented with so much hatred and greed and selfishness can't stand forever and when this empire does collapse our mutual survival will rest again in the hands of the people who belong to these lands and if we're lucky we will be offered a choice: learn how to live together and become one people; or perish. @

LET IT BE KNOWN THAT THIS SIGN MARKS THE CENTRE OF THE
ASUBPEESCHOSEEWAGONG ANISHINAABE TERRITORY.
FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL THIS LAND HAS BEEN OCCUPIED BY AND
CHERISHED BY ASUBPEESCHOSEEWAGONG ANISHINAABEK.
THE LAND IS INTEGRAL TO OUR IDENTITY AND EXISTENCE AS A PEOPLE.
FROM THIS POINT AS FAR AS THE ASUBPEESCHOSEEWAGONG ANISHINAABEK
HAVE TRAVELLED IS BY DIVINE RIGHT DECLARED ANISHINAABE TERRITORY.
WHAT THE CREATOR GAVE TO THE ANISHINAABE ONLY THE CREATOR CAN TAKE AWAY.

Adventures in Catholic Living

Bumblebee

As I write this, my next door neighbor is sifting through the pile of clothing we bought at the Goodwill Industries Bins yesterday. After sifting a mishmash of unwashed donated clothing on long tables, we bought an enormous pile for $18 including two sets of sheets in great conditions. She's turning the laundered fabric into slipcovers for my couch, which gets a lot of use since our friends all seem to gather here after art openings and poetry open mics. She's clever and knows how to sew. Her dog, who comes over just to hang out sometimes, sits next to me on the floor.

I live in an old warehouse building that's been converted into studios, galleries and living space for artists. Many of us are poor by choice, even if we have day jobs. Portland is filled with talented people in their 20s and 30s who all want to do the same artsy things, so it's hard to land a good job—and this is also a very Western city where people work to live instead of the other way around. Happily, it's also a city where it's mainstream to "freecycle" what you don't need, barter and sell on craigslist.org, etc. Picking berries at local farms outside the city is popular; so is buying locally in all forms.

My building is not officially cohousing or a commune, but I am close friends with some of my neighbors, and it's evolved into some undefined shared living arrangements. In fact, I feel like I have committed platonic relationships with a few people! So as she irons, I'm writing and cooking barley and lentils for stuffed peppers tomorrow with my neighbor and her boyfriend and my "brother" who followed me from my hometown. bought the green peppers the day that we picked up the fabric at Goodwill Bins. 34 cents each! We took my car to the city's edge and bought our week's supply. I'm able to afford a car, so I share errands and gas with my neighbors.

I didn't plan on living a communal life when I moved to Portland. I wanted to meet the guy of my dreams and live with him in our own house with a yard for the cats. I moved downtown to meet other artists, and I met my current boyfriend, who's just finishing a year overseas as a nurse in a third world country. This is the other reason that I'm so glad to have friends around that I can share chores with. We write and paint together, we run errands together. My

new way of living has taught me to think of giving in less formal terms. It's also taught me to let other people help me and to be real with the people in my life.

Our shared lives and resources demonstrate my Catholic faith of loving my neighbors and creating a world where we share what we have. True, it's baby steps, this boundaried communalism—nothing like what the Catholic Workers up the road are living. We each have our own place, and we rarely give or borrow money. Each of us has an apartment, and we don't pool our income, but we do share our time and resources, and we bypass traditional economies using tools like craigslist and freecycling. We take EVERYTHING we can to the freecycle pile—safety pins, old boards that artists can use, you name it. And this is for completely self-interested reasons along with some inherent frugalness.

In fact, I think our own basic independence—because artists are stubborn, self-sufficient people by nature—is what makes this work. It doesn't feel like charity. It feels like getting rid of what you don't need, and taking what you do. It's using resources that other people might discard because they can be useful for making art—and applying that to the rest of your life, too. It's working creatively with what's available to you rather than always starting from scratch.

My agnostic and liberal but apolitical friends would wince if they knew I thought of our living style in spiritual terms. ;) So what. I'm proud of how Portland and my generation are reinventing relationships and money. Just as the Catholic church, God's body, are the people who show up for mass, how we show up for life as Christians is how we will counterculturally ring about God's kingdom on earth, differing theology aside. This is what gives me hope. @

Balancing the Sorrow and the Joy

Sarah Bjorknas

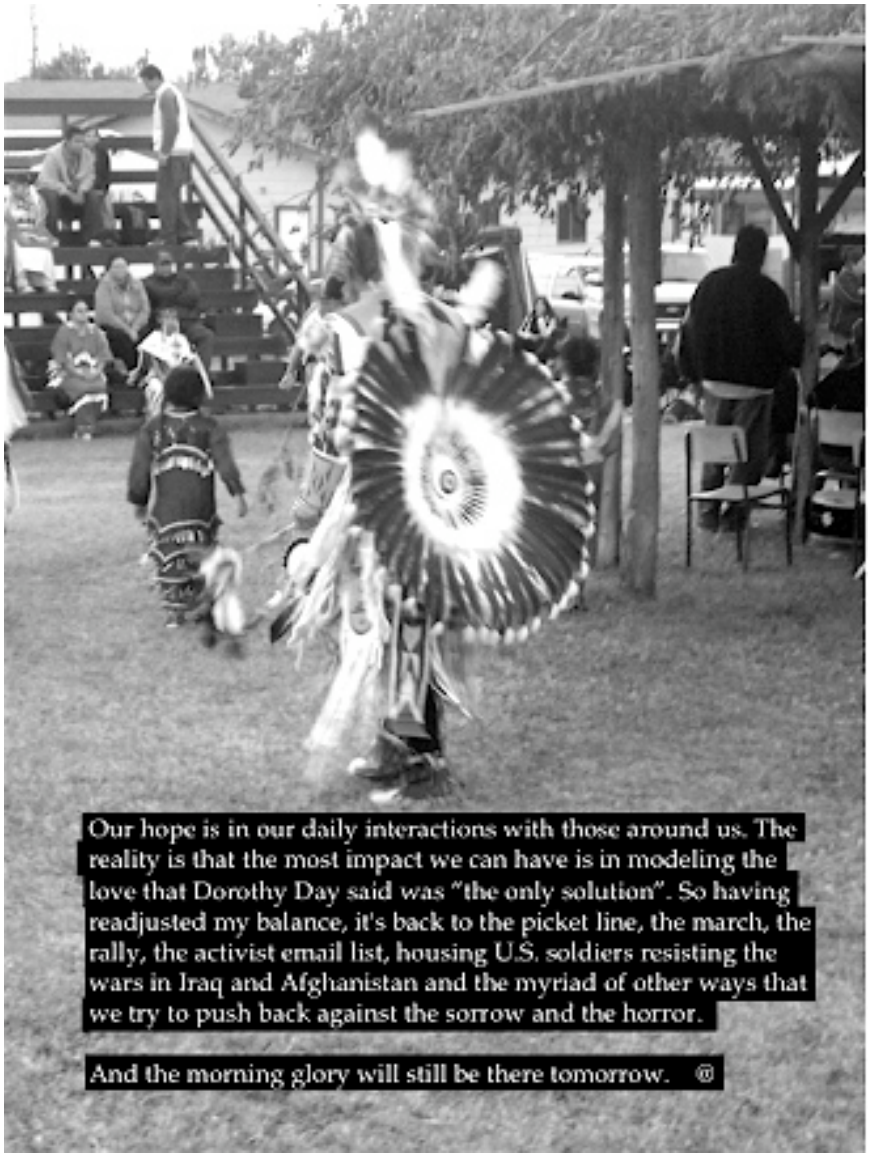
How do I endure the sorrow, the horror? How do I not become overwhelmed?

How do I cling to the joy and the beauty?

How do I find balance?

I find myself revisiting this personal challenge more and more frequently now. Today I was reminded of it while reading the beautiful reflective words of Murphy Davis from Atlanta's Open Door community. A seamless dialogue on the need for reflection and meditation, the horror of war, the beauty found in the truth of art that depicts the horror of war and violence, the injustice of the "justice" system, the wonder and awe of God's creation and it's creatures, the struggle & pain of cancer, the strength and solidarity of family and the shame of state instituted murder through the death penalty. Whew. What a ride. I honour the spirit and the gift to convey so much in one short article.

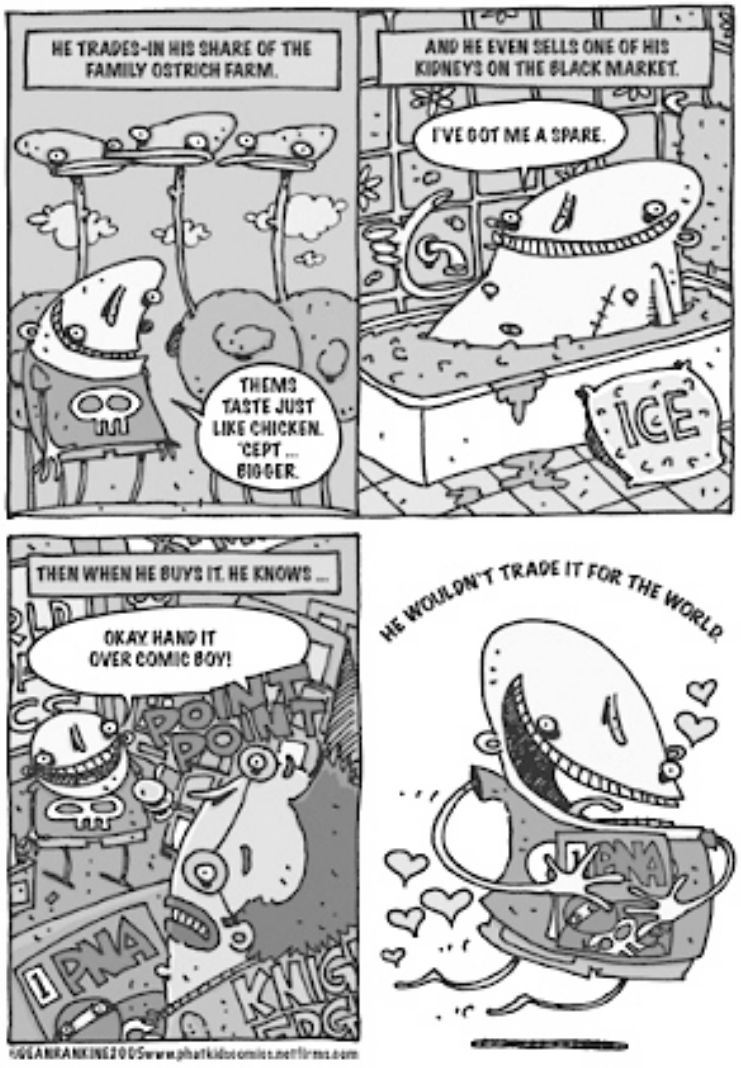
Where does it leave me? Continuing to struggle with balance, but reminded to hold firm to the ways that I personally have found to touch beauty and cultivate hope. There is the jungle that we call our backyard, full of wild and cultivated growing goodness and some very happy bees. Amazing that when you actually get out there to do it, half an hour of pulling up morning glory (bindweed) is joyful and theraputic. There is also the neighbourhood animal population, our contribution being a black dog -Ronnie- and a black cat -Derv. Derv and his grey buddy Thomas are the undisputed mob bosses of the neighbourhood, giving cats and dogs a run for their money (or kibble). Ronnie, she loves everyone and everything. She is the epitome of enthusiasm and in the process is helping me to develop my upper body strength! Walking and playing with Ronnie gets us out into the community, conversing with friends and strangers, seeing how others are cultivating nature and just drawing us out when we might otherwise tend to stay in.



Our hope is in our daily interactions with those around us. The reality is that the most impact we can have is in modeling the love that Dorothy Day said was "the only solution". So having readjusted my balance, it's back to the picket line, the march, the rally, the activist email list, housing U.S. soldiers resisting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the myriad of other ways that we try to push back against the sorrow and the horror.

And the morning glory will still be there tomorrow. @

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS KINDA LIKE AN ISSUE ONE OF 'PUNISHMENT NINJA ASSASSIN' IN PRISTINE CONDITION
COMICS
YOU WILL BE MINE. ISSUE ONE OF 'PUNISHMENT NINJA ASSASSIN' IN PRISTINE CONDITION.
YES...
YOU...
WILL...
BE...
AND WHEN A COMIC BOOK FAN FINDS AN ISSUE ONE OF 'PUNISHMENT NINJA ASSASSIN' IN PRISTINE CONDITION, HE RUNS HOME AND SELLS HIS ENTIRE COMIC COLLECTION.
ARR-HA-HA.
HE OFF LOADS HIS CORN CHIP THAT LOOKS JUST LIKE ELVIS, ON E-BAY.


HE TRADES-IN HIS SHARE OF THE FAMILY OSTRICH FARM.
AND HE EVEN SELLS ONE OF HIS KIDNEYS ON THE BLACK MARKET.
I'VE GOT ME A SPARE.
THEMS TASTE JUST LIKE CHICKEN. 'CEPT ... BIGGER.
ICE
THEN WHEN HE BUYS IT, HE KNOWS ...
OKAY HAND IT OVER COMIC BOY!
HE WOULDN'T TRADE IT FOR THE WORLD

Guild System - 1200 A.D.

By Peter Maurin

1. In 1200 A.D.
   there was no Capitalist System,
   there was the Guild System.

2. The doctrine of the Guilds
   was the doctrine
   of the Common Good.

3. The people used to say
   as they do now:
   "What can I do for you?"
   but they meant what they said.

4. Now they say one thing
   and they mean another.

5. They did not look for markets,
   they let markets
   look for them.

We Believe So We Speak
2nd Corinthians 4:13

Sr. Victoria Marie is a Franciscan Sister of Joy and co-foundress of the Vancouver Catholic Worker where she lives.

Sarah Rich is the mother of Suzanne Swift, a soldier who was repeatedly harassed and raped by ranking officers in Iraq. While she was sent to the brig for desertion her victimizers went unpunished, two of them were honorably discharged. She was stripped of her rank and continues to serve in the US Army. Her mother is trying to raise awareness of command rape in the US military.

Bridgette Gottschalk--though not affiliated with any religion--is active in the community spreading the message of equality and love for all. She is a local artist, activist, and co-founder of Vegan Voices, an animal rights group dissolved and re-emerged as Vancouver Vegetarian Association.

Tavis Dodds is a roving activist, philosopher and contributor to *The Christian Radical* and *The Republic of East Vancouver*.

Bumblebee lives in Old Town, a Portland, Oregon neighborhood that's home to the homeless, agencies that help them, and artists. She continues to believe unapologetically in a light that never goes out despite the nihilism that is a byword in the circles she travels.

Sarah Bjorknas is co-founder of Samaritan House (The Vancouver Catholic Worker) She is also the Vancouver coordinator of the War Resisters Support Campaign.

Dean Rankine is a part-time Community Development Worker with a Needle and Syringe Program and part-time cartoonist. You can see more of his work online at - www.webcomicsnation.com/deanrankine

Peter Maurin b. May 9, 1877 d. 1949 was co-founder with Dorothy Day of the Catholic Worker movement. He lived his whole life in holy poverty; his "Easy Essays" form a cornerstone of the movement's philosophy.

Daniel Huizenga, Hazel Pratt, Michael Snarr, Hillary Scarsella, Josina Debree and Chris Rooney took the large photos in this issue, the drawing on page 8 is by Kevin Larimee the rest of the images were taken from Google the editors hope this constitutes fair use.